

2005 Eckhart Tolle On the edge of Awakening

[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 1:21:40)

As we are approaching the end of the weekend, the weekend of awakening, I wonder how many questions have managed to survive in your mind. You may feel a pressure, almost a kind of pressure inside your mind of a question or questions wanting to be asked, needing to be answered. And when those questions are answered, there'll be more because every answer will generate further questions.

And so there's no need, there's no end to the number of questions you could ask about awakening. It is true that certain answers can be helpful. They can take you up to a certain point of understanding.

Up to a certain point, understanding can be helpful. One could say it's like understanding how do I get from here to the edge of the cliff? And to know how you get from here to the edge of the cliff, to know that, certain signposts may be required to point you in the end of understanding.

Up to a certain point, understanding can be helpful. One could say it's like understanding how do I get from here to the edge of the cliff? And to know how you get from here to the edge of the cliff, to know that, certain signposts may be required to point you in the direction of the edge, that way or that way.

And when you have reached the edge, signposts are not necessary anymore. In fact, they become a hindrance. An essential part of the process of awakening.

And that is something that the human mind and the human ego look upon as almost an insult. An essential part of the awakening is letting go of the need to understand more. And to realize that ultimately, awakening is not to do with understanding more.

And finally, when you have reached complete understanding, you're awake. And the great surprise or even shock that comes, that has come to those who have awakened, they didn't know more when they awakened. If anything, they knew less.

So if we can participate here this afternoon, as you sit here, participate in what we could call renunciation, not renunciation of sugar or sex or material possessions or whatever it is that people try to use to become free, a deeper renunciation. Because all those that I mentioned and many others are surface renunciations that could actually and very often do strengthen your conceptual identity as the one who has renounced, the one who is superior because he or she has renounced sugar, money, sex, whatever. And realize it is not through thought that you can awaken.

It is not through adding more to the accumulation of thought in your mind that you can awaken. It is not through any adding to yourself in any way, whether material things or

thought forms or ideas or beliefs or experiences. It is not through adding more to yourself, to the content of your mind that you awaken.

It is not through adding more thought to the huge accumulation of thought forms that each human being, including yourself, already walks around with and derives their sense of self from, the me. And the momentum that this accumulated thought structure that most people identify with as themselves, that accumulated movement of thought with all its accumulated content, thought forms, knowledge, experiences, memories, all thoughts, that has enormous momentum. And an essential part of that momentum is that it needs more to add to itself because the thought structure of yourself, the mind made self, believes that it is not yet complete.

It needs more and that more could be more understanding it says, I don't yet understand the purpose of the universe. And it might say, I've come here, listened to all these speakers and I still don't understand the purpose of the universe and how it all works and how I fit into it. What's my place in it?

That's the most important question. What about me? There's all that, but this is more important in a deeper sense that is true.

In a superficial sense, it's an illusion. So there is this need in the mind that is the mind to accumulate. And if you are here this weekend, that means you have gone beyond the base forms of accumulation, well, more or less.

And that is needing to accumulate material possessions and thus by, and again, it's not the material possession that is ultimately what counts to the mind. It's the thought form because you don't know what's out there. You only know it as a thought form.

That's what it wants. Identify with another thought form, the mansion, mine, the car, my car. A thought form becomes invested with self.

And so it is added to the accumulated thought forms that make up the me. And so you have already gone beyond to a large extent, although it may still linger a little bit, those base forms of identifications. You may also have gone beyond of needing to add to yourself other thought forms, the thought forms of people think that I am great.

The thought forms of getting recognition. Oh, aren't you great? Aren't you great?

The thought form that needs to feel that you are famous. You've made it in the eyes of the world. The world tells you, yes, yes, you are important.

The phone rings all the time. Everybody wants to talk to you. I am important.

And that's a nice thought form. And many of us longing for that, that need in millions of people, particularly in Western culture, that longing of, I haven't made it yet. Once I

make it, then I will be complete.

And that means once I have added further thought forms to me, further mental images of who I am, which other people will tell me, that's who you are. Ah, you are such and such. Satisfying mental labels, president of so that.

So you may have gone beyond status or status. For many years, English pronunciation is status. Status here so that you understand what I say.

Status, it's that you've gone beyond that probably. But the movement of needing to add more to yourself may still be there, but it may have moved to more subtle dimensions. And the more subtle dimensions could be the dimension of knowledge, dimension of accumulating thought forms as knowledge, spiritual knowledge, perhaps, having read many spiritual books, attended many workshops, retreats, Buddhist monasteries or other monasteries.

Or you may have come here also in that search of more, adding more to me. And perhaps that more, the most subtle of all mores was the more spiritual realization, the ultimate attainment. I can add that and then I'll be finally complete.

And you look for it then in the realm of understanding more, which is mind. And that can keep you trapped in the subtle realms of needing more for the rest of your life. And that is the fate of being a spiritual seeker for the rest of your life.

In itself, not such a bad identity, spiritual seeker. It's better than many others. But the seeking movement is there.

The not yet having found is there because there has not been a renunciation of the movement of thought because it's the movement of thought that is the momentum behind the search for more. So when we speak of renouncing thought, we are not saying that you are never to think again. It is the awakening out of the stream of thinking with which perhaps you've been identified all your life as a me.

And the possibility of stepping out of that movement of thought is always here now. And it is here now as you sit here. Listen, you can sit here with a burning question at the back or the front of your mind.

I'm going to ask him, when the moment he stops speaking, I'm going to ask him that question. Doesn't make sense what he's saying. Or you can sit here as a field of alert, aware presence in which the words are being perceived almost as if they were coming from within yourself in which all the other peripheral perceptions are taking place, visual, man sitting on a chair, flowers.

I'm labeling the perceptions right now, but as you perceive in that spacious field of presence that you are, you perceive through that, the need to label, the compulsive

need to label what is going on around you at any moment, to work it out, to interpret, I need to know. What's the speaker going, what's he going on about? That compulsive need is renounced.

Now that sounds as if you could do something, as if you could, when I say this, it sounds as if you could choose to step out of that continuous stream of thinking into spacious awareness. And from one perspective, you can, it is true, but it's only a perspective. And whatever words say, it's only a perspective because words are thoughts.

These words, these thoughts that have become words point beyond themselves, they are pointers. In themselves, they are not really helpful. If you can never go beyond the signpost, like the dog that continuously looks at the master's finger and the master says, the stick is there, there, I threw it there.

If you can't go beyond the signpost, then you go home with a few more accumulated signposts. Not enough yet, of course. So is it true that you can choose to step out of the identification with that stream of thinking and be present?

Yes, from one perspective, but how is it that there are other people in this city who didn't come here, and if they were here, they would say, what the hell is he talking about? It doesn't make sense at all. I occasionally, because now so many people read *The Power of Now*, occasionally it gets into the hands of people who are not quite ready for it yet.

And occasionally I get emails that say, your book makes no sense whatsoever. So when I say you can choose to step out of the stream of thinking, this may not be true for everyone. But how is it that you can do that and somebody else in this city who may be engaged in other activities right now cannot do it?

Well, perhaps they can, but they don't know they can. Somehow the apple is not ripe yet. And so here we come to the limits of language because it's ultimately not you doing it.

It's a way of putting it. It's a way of looking at it. But when you feel that, yes, I can step out of presence, which is still a thought, that's not it, of course.

I can step out of identification with thinking to experience the peace that is there when you can be without the need to think. And the thoughts that may still arise are not that important anymore because there is space around them. You can do that because it's happening here through you.

It wants to happen. There is an illusionary impulse at work in humanity. And to say that you can step out of identification with mental noise, identification with concepts, identification with the seeking entity, the me, to say that really means when you feel, yes, that unconditioned consciousness is suddenly there.

It wants to flower through this form. If it didn't want to flower through this form, you couldn't do it because you and it are not separate. Only language creates the separation.

So whatever we say about it, do not believe that there's any absolute truth in anything that words can say about it. So a shift, an inner shift from thought to awareness, presence, and then the miracle happens and it is happening for many of you here now of being here as a field of awareness rather than as a person. And the miracle is there when you can look upon this room, listen to this voice, and let it be so completely allow it to be as it is so completely that there's no need to add mental commentaries to it.

You can look at the flowers and perceive it through what we could call stillness, alert, aware stillness. And that is the arising of an intelligence far greater than the limited human mind, which is only a small aspect of the vastness of intelligence, the one intelligence. And that's, again, a very limited word.

The arising within you of non-conceptual intelligence. That is what Krishnamurti called the awakening of intelligence. And that is there when you renounce thought.

Thought subsides. It can still happen. And when it's needed, it's there beautifully, not problematically.

When self, a sense of self is invested in thought, thought becomes problematic. And the self that almost everybody lives with is burdened with that sense of self is in itself problematic. You cannot separate problematic from yourself.

You can, they are indistinguishable. To walk around with a mind-derived self is to be problematic, is to live in a problematic life situation and to experience your life as problematic because you live mostly then in past and future, which is problematic. Whereas this moment is not problematic ever.

There's no room for problematic here. Here, how can a problem survive here? It only survives as a thought form in the head that is invested with self.

What's going to happen to me? That's the ultimate question. Am I going to make it?

Or is the universe going to defeat me? And so you get, this becomes the antagonistic attitude towards life. The fight against this or that, the fight against violence.

Oh. Oh. Hatred.

And then you get the fight against illness. We are going to get you. Problematic.

So to step out of all that so that your self, your sense of self is no longer in the movement of thought, that's all that it is. There's still a movement of thought. Your sense of self is not invested in every thought that arises.

This way, you're pulled this way and then you're pulled that way. Or you may have deeply lodged thoughts that never leave you. Obsessions, convictions, beliefs, this is how it is.

Just ask me, I'll tell you how it is. Deeply entrenched thought forms that many people walk around with. And they say, that's me.

They don't see it as thought forms that they walk around with. They are the thought forms. They are the convictions.

They are the one who is looking for somebody to disagree with, to strengthen their sense of self. They are their thoughts. So stepping out of that is the great liberation.

It's the renunciation. And to some people, the renunciation of that thought comes because they can't stand thought anymore. It becomes so painful that finally they renounce.

And what they do then is they, the renunciation of thought, of course, is also the renunciation of past and future. Except for practical things, that's okay. But as that overwhelming concern with me and my future and things that happened in the past, things that are going to happen to me or not going to happen to me, renounce that and recognize that past and future are only thought forms, no more.

They have no existence. Time, which is past and future, has no existence except as thought. You cannot encounter past and future.

Nobody has ever met the past, touched it, seen it, lived in it. You may think people lived in the past. How can they live in the past?

The Romans, they lived 2,000 years ago. That sounds plausible. But of course they didn't.

They lived in the now. And so unless you create a thought form of past, there's no past. And the moment you can only create a thought form at this moment, out of the fullness of now, which is consciousness itself, oh, is that what it is?

Yes. The now is unconditioned, pure consciousness itself. Primordial intelligence.

And out of that arise forms, thought forms. And they become the conditioned form consciousness. And then thought forms become material forms.

So we have thought, which are objects in consciousness, sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions. They are all objects because they become, you perceive what you call a flower. It's somehow the image goes through your eyes, becomes a nerve impulse, whatever they say, then gets reconstructed in the brain, which nobody, the greatest doctor has no idea how it works.

And then you get an image arises of a flower. It's a thought form too. An object in consciousness, not conceptual thought, sense perception, conceptual thought.

Objects in consciousness and consciousness. Most people walk around identified continuously with objects in consciousness. They don't know themselves as the underlying space, space consciousness.

Here we have another pointer in case you didn't get the first one. Ultimate terms, objects in consciousness are things. Because we are speaking of form.

So most people's lives consist of things that they are concerned with. Thoughts are things, material things, that comes first. And that's from large part of the population of the planet.

The entire existence is consumed by concern with material things. And that applies both to the poor part of the world and to the wealthy part of the world. The poor are concerned with material things because they may not have enough to meet all the needs of the body.

And the wealthy are concerned with material things because nothing is ever enough to the me. I need more, it's the unconscious movement of more. So there's one level on which one's life, one's entire existence is concerned with things, objects.

And then it's things in a wider sense are anything that arises in your mind as an object. Thought forms, experiences, knowledge. One thing after another arises inside you.

It's a burden to live in such a way, one's life being consumed by one damn thing after another. You know how life is, it never leaves you alone. Next thing comes and it demands your attention.

It can be a thought that demands your attention. It can be a phone call, which is also a thought. This is important, this is what's going on.

And when you've solved one thing, another one comes up from behind. So you may have noticed the world of things doesn't leave you alone. It always has something, always some new thing comes up to demand your attention.

You're surrounded by things and not only outside, unfortunately, and then you carry the accumulated content of thought forms inside you, which is object consciousness, we could say, and you are burdened with that. And this is how people live, how they at work, in families, that continues one thing after another. What's the next thing we have to do?

And another, another. And when they're not concerned with things, they go into the hypnotic state of switching on some entertainment device. First consumed by things, and then finally click.

What a life. What a life. It's living in a room crammed full with things.

You can't even move in it anymore. And then you step out of identification with thought forms. How do you do that, says the thought form.

Give me a technique, says another thought. And okay, there are seven steps. That will take you seven years.

Now, if we did that here, this gathering would be more satisfying to the mind because you could go home and tell your family when they ask you, what did you come away with? What did you learn? And you could say, I learned seven steps and it'll take me seven years.

Oh, that's great, you got your money's worth. And so it's satisfying to be given more time to the mind because it has that need. It loves it.

It's just waiting for something like that. And it's frustrating to the mind to be sitting here and saying, okay, yeah, but how? We can say, renounce thought.

We could say, renounce time. But even that is still maybe a little bit abstract. To put it even more simply, we could say, renounce the next moment because you notice that most of your life, you're more interested in the next moment than in this one.

A deeply conditioned movement. Renounce that need for the next moment, the psychological need for, okay, what's next? And be completely with this, what is now.

Completely allowing this moment so precious, not precious because it's fleeting, that's a superficial way of looking at the present moment. Sometimes people say, this moment is so fleeting, just, you know, it'll be over soon. Just, it's so, just hang on to it and remember it, remember it, take a photo of it.

No, it's not precious because of that, because the present moment is not fleeting. The forms are fleeting that arise in the field of now, come and go. But when you enter the now with your attention and don't take it too literally, it's just a pointer.

When you enter the now with your attention, then you renounce the next moment. And a completely different quality of being arises when you become present to what is, instead of denying it, running away from it, making it to a means to an end. And it is at that moment, the mind falls away.

And then you realize how vast the space is inside you and how relatively insignificant anything in object consciousness is compared to the depths, the spaciousness within you, the stillness. How relatively insignificant any thought that comes into your mind is, relatively insignificant. How relatively insignificant anything that happens or doesn't happen is, you see the relativity of whatever happens in the realm of object

consciousness, in the realm of things.

Okay, it's nicer perhaps to live in a beautiful place than to live in a beautiful mansion than to live in a little hut or a little room on the surface. Yes, it might be nicer. But if you have not found the dimension that is beyond object consciousness in yourself and live in a mansion, the mansion is not going to do that much for you.

And if you have found it in the little room, whether you are in a little room or a mansion, doesn't matter that much anymore. Because there's such aliveness to the field of now, it doesn't really matter where you go, what the things are that surround you, it's relative, they matter relatively, but not absolutely. And then the universe around you is recognized as playful.

Forms that come and go, experiences, different places come and go. It's a bit like when you are rooted in the now, you are rooted in being, you are rooted in yourself. And there's such fullness to now, it is the fullness of life itself.

Because before life becomes a thing, before life becomes an object, before life becomes a life form, there is life, consciousness, whatever word. And to know yourself as that is the ultimate liberation. What is liberation?

What are you liberated from? You are liberated from the world of things, from obsession, from being consumed by things, which includes thoughts. You are liberated from time, also as an obsession that you are consumed by.

And you're liberated from a very heavy sense of self, a me, what the Buddha called the self. Oh, all that. The key then, the little opening into what we might call space consciousness.

This is not from science fiction. Space consciousness within yourself, the unconditioned consciousness. How do I get from being consumed and identified with object consciousness to recognizing myself as space?

Ah, it doesn't work by trying to run away from the world. It's through allowing whatever form this moment takes, the world of form, the world of objects, allowing whatever form this moment takes, internally allowing it to be as it is. External forms, inner forms, thoughts, emotions, feelings, allow the suchness of this moment.

No longer make the now into an enemy. The moment you allow what is to be, there is what one could call a sense of space around what is. It could be an event that usually would trigger in you upset or impatience or anger.

And you'd simply say yes to it because it is. And suddenly there's space around the event. That's just a little pointer.

And this is a beautiful thing to discover, the space around things. So why should I allow something to be? Because it is, it already is the case.

Yeah, but it shouldn't be happening, but it is. At this moment, the mind says nothing will ever change if I allow this moment to be as it is. The deeper truth is if I internally am antagonistic towards this moment, ultimately nothing is ever going to change because that is the old consciousness, which it keeps itself in place, the egoic consciousness, the mind identified consciousness, the object identified consciousness keeps itself in place through fighting what is, the me.

How could one argue with the isness of this moment once you realize that the entire cosmos is connected, interconnected, everything in the cosmos is totally interconnected. Physicists know that. So nothing that happens is isolated, an isolated event.

It is connected with the totality. And within the totality, it makes sense. In many, many cases, you could never work out through your understanding, mental understanding, how an event that on the surface looks senseless or looks as if it shouldn't be happening, you could never work out through intellectual understanding how the totality has brought this event about.

Because no mind, no human mind can even understand a fragment of the totality. It would be presumptuous to an absurd degree to believe that through the human mind, you could understand the totality of the universe and then explain it through words, using five vowel sounds, A, I, E, O, U. Five sounds are the basic sounds.

And then there are the others, I can't remember what they're called, consonants, I think. They are sounds that are produced through air pressure, produced by shh, poof, shh, poof. So you have the five vowel sounds plus a few noises produced through air pressure.

And we believe that we could explain something, the universe. So you see how useful it is to give up trying to understand. But what we can't see, and this is confirmed not only by the ancient wisdom traditions of humanity, such as Buddhism, but also even through recent discoveries in molecular atomic physics, the interconnectedness of all things that we can know.

Yes, we don't know how, we can't understand how in what way, but we can see, yes, it all is ultimately one. The universe is one. It is one both at the unmanifested level, the primordial one, the unconditioned one, the unborn as the Buddha called it, the unborn, the uncreated, the unmanifested.

Beautiful saying of the Buddha, he said, there is amongst, that's how the translation goes, there is amongst the uncreated, the unborn, the unmanifested. If there were not the uncreated, the unborn, the unmanifested, there would be no escape from the born,

the created, the manifested. So to, yes, we can see it, the universe is one, both as the unmanifested, obviously, and it is one as an organism, even in the manifested realm, it is one organism, which has many different cells to it.

One cell in the organism is humanity. Humanity also is one organism. And what humans are doing to each other is a diseased organism in many ways.

So the universe is one organism, whatever happens has its place within the totality, even if it seems completely incomprehensible. And many things do happen that say, why is this happening? And just to simply see what one could call the inevitability of what is within the context the larger context of the whole, to see the inevitability of whatever form this moment takes in your life.

Whatever happens could not be otherwise. Oh, you do not need to understand it. Occasionally it happens that after an event, you can get a glimpse of understanding, only a glimpse if you're lucky, tiny glimpse.

Some of you may have experienced something seemingly negative and incomprehensible happening to you, life doing something to you, making you ill, a serious illness, losing everything. So it doesn't make sense anymore. I went to church every Sunday and I worked my off and I lost it all, this wasn't supposed to happen, I don't understand anymore.

And years later, you sit in the Inner Directions Conference and suddenly say, wow, if that hadn't happened, of course I wouldn't be here, I would still be slaving away in the corporate office. If those bad things hadn't happened to me, I would never have gone beyond the conditioning. So occasionally you might get a glimpse, but in many other cases, you may not get a glimpse of why.

But it is wonderful to see that yes, there is an inevitability to whatever form this moment takes. And so if you do not resist the form that this moment takes internally, you are no longer trapped or imprisoned by the form that this moment takes. Because very often, that's what it looks like.

That's why people always try to get away from this moment. It's very often, it looks like a limitation upon you, upon your life. That's not what I want.

But what am I doing sitting here in this office, in this place, in this relationship, in this, that, this, that, the other? Whatever form this moment takes to align yourself with it. The moment you do that, and it's not a doing, only through language it creates the illusion that you're doing something.

It's, one could say it's the opposite of any doing. To internally align yourself with what is is the opposite of, okay, I have to do something. You don't have to do anything, just this is as it is.

Always recognize that there's no doing involved. This, it is as it is. You align yourself with a form that you don't fight the form.

The moment you fight the form, the form of me gets strengthened in yourself. The me that is based on my thought forms gets stronger through the struggle, the reaction, the reactivity against what is. Ultimately, you could say the illusion of me gets strengthened through fighting what is.

And you can verify that in your own life when you are resisting whatever situation or in disagreement with someone. This shouldn't be reactivity to see how your sense of self feels a little bit inflated through that. And you can see it when you watch angry people who are fighting.

There's some people who live almost continuously in angry opposition to what is. The entire universe is against them or they are against it. The world is their enemy.

And they're just looking for the next thing to get upset about. And you can see how that strengthens, how that inflates the egoic sense of self, the reactivity, the fighting what is, the complaining pattern in the mind. Oh, and every time you complain, you strengthen a little bit the form identity of me, the complainer, the thought form, the reaction.

And the egoic identity inflates a little bit through the complaint, because every complaint means that you are right and what you're complaining about is wrong. Situation, a person, a place, you are superior to that which you are complaining about. That is the illusion, how the illusory self entity inflates itself continuously through that.

It doesn't never last for long and I need something else. But once you watch that process in yourself or in another, it's a little bit easier to see it in somebody else. How the self importance grows through every complaint.

The imagined superiority of me as compared to that which you are complaining about. And some people complain about the world. Of course, it's a mad place, but complaining doesn't help very much.

They complain about humans, people. People are so unconscious. Oh God, what is wrong with you?

You should know better, but they don't. So to see how that fighting what is strengthens the thought made me and accepting what is, allowing it, surrendering to this moment, the form that this moment takes. That's all that ever changes.

This moment never changes. It's always now. Saying yes to the form doesn't mean you can't take action.

If action is needed, it comes out of the yes instead out of the no. Totally different quality

of action that comes out of saying, well, this is how it is. Here I am, two coins in my pocket, wet, not much food in the stomach.

That's it. That's what is at this moment. Okay.

And you go beyond the form of this moment and there is suddenly a peace from deep within. And there's a beauty even to that moment, the form of that moment, but the beauty may not be in the form, but it comes from a deeper place of the formless, the formless life that you are, the very life that you are underneath the form as which you appear. And here you know it not through rejecting the forms, but through accepting the forms.

So the magic formula then is, but it doesn't work if it remains a thought form, the forms that seem to limit you in your life are the concealed openings into the formless. The conditions that seem to limit you are the portals into the unconditioned, that which you are in your essence. And some people have experienced extreme forms of limitation in their life, physical, material, physical, through the body not working properly anymore, physical limitations, prison camp, some other awful limitation.

And some people have experienced, have realized when they let go of resistance to this moment, even in the most dreadful situations, the most dreadful limitations, they suddenly realized the formless space that they are, peace. So if you can look upon your life and see where is it that life seems to limit you, what is the area where you feel hemmed in by life, the forms in your life, your life situation. It could be relationships, could be a place where you live, the people you live with, the physical structures around you, the house or the work situation, whatever it may be.

And so almost everybody experiences some form of limitation in their life, some form of limitation and see if there, and then you might notice also that you are in an almost habitual resistance to those limitations, those forms in your life. And see what happens if you let go of the resistance to what is. Use that and see what happens if you let go of the no to this moment.

You may be surprised how quickly things change, how quickly the stuckness gets unstuck when you surrender. And some of you have experienced it already in certain areas of your life. How quickly you become free of the conditioned, not by trying to reach some point of the unconditioned in the future, the limitless, but by not offering inner resistance to the conditioned.

With that deep acceptance of what is comes what a word that I usually avoid because it can easily become a thought form and it is so been misused so much. With acceptance of what is comes love. You love what is.

That goes, we don't even need to say love. It's there when you, there's an allowing of

whatever form this moment takes, love arises. So the secret is not to turn your back upon the limitations and trying to reach some point in the future where you realize yourself as unlimited.

Once you've sorted out your life situation, it's never going to happen. Not for long. Then some new things, something else crops up.

Instead of looking for some liberation at a future moment, the more limited you are in your life situation, there are degrees of limitation. Very limited, for example, would be if your body may not make it for that much longer anymore. They might have said you may have two months, two more months.

You may be limited in other areas. You may be listening to this on a tape and find yourself in a prison cell. Those extreme limitations are the most powerful openings, the most powerful openings into presence, into space.

When you surrender to that, and so it happens in some people's lives, there is one big thing, one, what Christians used to call or still do, your cross. One big thing in your life that is a dreadful burden or seems a dreadful limitation. Most of you have many little things.

That's fine too. That works too. But the one big thing works even better.

If you're lucky enough to want to have one big thing in your life that's, oh, oh, absolutely unacceptable. Nobody could accept that. Well, that's what the mind says.

And then surrender happens. For many of you, it will be a case of little surrenders. Even today, as you leave here, there may be an opportunity for a little surrender in some situation.

What is a little surrender? What is surrender? It's the shift from no to yes.

Surrender is detecting an inner no to what is and then saying, ha, ha, there it goes. And then to see, well, but it is. And then you look upon what is.

Hmm. Acceptance means it's not judged anymore. It's allowed to be.

And there's a field of attention. There's your prison cell, which you've been extremely unhappy about for the past 10 years. And even more unhappy because you know you have another 15 years to go.

And then you listen to the tape. And then you sit there and you look upon the walls that surround you and maybe a little window with bars on and an uncomfortable place that you sit on. And there's light shining perhaps through the window.

Oh yes, and your body is alive. It feels alive. Every cell is alive.

And yes, even the wall has aliveness to it. Why didn't I see that before? Because I was looking at the wall through a screen of mental concepts.

Why couldn't I feel the aliveness that is in every cell of my body before? Because I was preoccupied with the thoughts in my mind, mindful objects in my consciousness, one after another, all saying, this is dreadful and unacceptable. This is what my life has come to.

This is what the world has done to me. It's telling yourself the story in your head again and again and again. So you couldn't feel the aliveness.

You couldn't see the light. And you couldn't sense the stillness and the peace that were always there as inseparable from spacious awareness, the essence of your being. Was always there, never knew it.

And this is how surrender to one big thing can take you where once and for all. Surrender is no more than surrender to this moment as it is. No other spiritual practice is required.

But if you're happy with other spiritual practices, that's fine too. But every spiritual practice ultimately points to that. So why not do it now?

What beauty in welcoming the only thing there ever is, which is now. What beauty in welcoming the form that this now takes, whatever the form may be. And realize yourself as that which is deeper than any form.

Stillness, peace, space. Not that which happens, but the space in which it happens. That's who you are.

And so when you look at night into space, the vastness of outer space, vast, infinite, infinite depth, that's the external version of who you are. And then you also notice when you look there, you see, oh, well, it's so simple. There are basically two things in this world, space and things in space.

It's as simple as that. The world consists of space and things in space, or rather things in space are the world. Let's change it slightly.

Things in space are the world and space is that, which goes beyond anything that words could say. But it's so obvious, even if you look through the senses, that there's basically even this room. There are things, bodies, chairs, flowers, lights, and there's space.

The space usually nobody notices. And usually nobody notices the inner space, the stillness that is underneath the noise, the incredible spaciousness that is there within you. So you are the bridge between the inner space the object world and the formless unconditioned, the one.

And you move through this world, interacting with form still, your body is form too, thoughts still happen occasionally. You interact with other forms and the play of forms continues all around you and you are rooted in the formless, which is peace. And the world is then the play of forms around you, so to speak, so to speak.

And nothing in the world of form matters that much anymore. And it's only then that, and this is almost a paradox, something that is not of this world, which is the world of objects, something that is not of this world shines through this form into this world. And the formless, a certain transparency happens through surrender to what is, a certain transparency happens and so the unconditioned shines through into the world of form and the world of form then is experienced as a more benign place.

When that comes through you and it transforms how you experience the world of form also. Not that the world of form will lose its characteristics of having polarities, it has polarities. The world of form will always have certain polarities, otherwise forms could not survive, high, low, hot, cold.

But the manifestation of the polarities of the world of form will become more benign, not the harshness. So one could say love comes into this world and love is not of this world. That's how the world changes.

Not that it matters that much anymore, whether or not it changes. And you certainly, as you surrender to what is, you relinquish the need for the world to change and then it changes. And that includes the need for your world to change, your situation, it must change.

Well, first accept what is and then see what happens. Thank you, thank you.